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SUBJECT: CUBA HUMAN RIGHTS ROUND-UP JAN. 1-11

Classified By: COM: M.E. Parmly : For reasons 1.4 b/d

¶1. (C) ANTUNEZ DETAINED FOR ATTEMPT TO DISTRIBUTE HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION: On 10 January several prominent dissidents including Martha Beatriz Roque (MBR), Jorge Luis Garcia Perez ("Antunez"), Felix Antonio Bonne Carcasses and Idania Yanes Contreras distributed copies of the UN of Human Rights to passers-by in the Havana neighborhood of Vedado. The dissidents wanted to mark the one year anniversary of the death of Miguel Valdes Tamayo, one of 75 opposition figures jailed during a massive crackdown in 2003. MBR had conducted a distribution of the declaration on 21 December in a different Havana neighborhood. The dissidents reported that once again ordinary people reacted positively to the distribution and demonstrated an increased willingness to openly discuss the problems in Cuba. However, in the early afternoon of 10 January authorities arrested Antunez and 3 others in the Havana home of Carlos Codero and took them to a local police station. The police confiscated 300 copies of the declaration. State security officials drove Antunez to his home in Placetas in the Province of Santa Clara. The other detainees were released. Officials warned Antunez that his request to be granted permission to leave the island temporarily for medical care will be denied unless he ceases such activity.

¶2. (C) CUBAN SOCIETY REACHES OUT TO CHILDREN IN POOR COMMUNITIES: On January 6 to celebrate Three Kings Day members of the Forum of Cuban Independent Academics (CPIC) lead by Roberto de Miranda distributed toys and clothing for children in Cambute, a poor community on the outskirts of Havana. On the same day, Sonia Garro Alfonso and other activists distributed presents in Marianao, one of the lowest income neighborhoods of Havana. To mark the occasion, the Damas de Blanco held a party and distributed gifts to the children of political prisoners in the Havana home of Laura Pollan. This is the first year any of these groups have held such activities and indicates a growing trend of opposition organizations doing community outreach.

¶2. (C) WIFE OF POLITICAL PRISONER COMPLAINS ABOUT FALSE NEWS STORIES: Independent journalist Lamasiel Gutierrez complained of a story that appeared on January 9 and 10 on several websites including Europa Press and Cuba Encuentro about her husband, Rolando Jimenez Posada, a lawyer imprisoned in Isla de Juventud since the crackdown of 2003.

The story stated that Jimenez had attempted to commit suicide with shards of a florescent light bulb. Gutierrez said that this story is completely false. In fact, her husband who is proud of resisting with dignity during his imprisonment was offended by the report. Although Gutierrez speculated on possible malicious intent, she acknowledges that Cuba is a closed society where it is difficult to obtain information, and that not only various websites but also major publications continually print articles about Cuba that are full of inaccuracies.

PARMLY